

# COBBETT'S WEEKLY POLITICAL REGISTER.

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"They" [the rulers of France] "have publicly asked pardon of God and man, and have done every thing  
"they can to resort to the ancient established principles of government; and, their measures, in every  
"point I have been able to view them, have that tendency. It is, therefore, an important consideration,  
"how far it would be prudent in this country to drive them again to revolutionary measures." —LORD  
HAWKESBURY'S SPEECH, 7th May, 1802.

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## SUMMARY OF POLITICS.

**CONTINENTAL COALITION.**—The motto to the present Number recalls the reader's attention to the time when Lord Hawkesbury and his colleagues were engaged in a defence of the public character and conduct of their common patron and prompter, Mr. Pitt. A motion had been made for censuring him, at least, by implication; whereupon that most important personage, Lord Belgrave, moved the *thanks* of the House of Commons to him for his conduct during his long administration, and particularly during the late war with France, which, his lordship stated, had been just then most happily and gloriously concluded, and all by means of the great wisdom, *integrity*, and *disinterestedness* of his Right Honourable Friend. To show the impropriety of this motion, Mr. Grey and others, entered into an examination of the then state of things, compared with that which Mr. Pitt had constantly promised the nation he would produce, before he made peace with France; and, amongst other things, it was observed, that the House of Bourbon was banished from France, and that the French government was, in its principle, still such as it had been during the whole time that Mr. Pitt had been at war against it. This drew from Lord Hawkesbury an assertion, that to restore the House of Bourbon had never been a principal object of the war; and, after an intervening sentence or two of verbosity, he came to the passage which has been now selected for a motto, and which it is certainly worth while to compare with the doctrine now held forth by the ministerial prints, particularly the *SUN*, relative to a war against the person of Bonaparte; or, in other words, a war for the purpose of effecting a counter-revolution in France. —When the reader has referred to the debate here spoken of, and has taken time to reflect on the declarations made by Mr. Pitt and his place-holders at the time of the peace, his attention will be requested to an article from the *SUN* of the 1st ultimo, which he will perceive to be a continuation of those that were noticed in the preceding sheet, p. 340, and the object

of the whole of which articles he will find very little difficulty in discovering. "According to reports in the diplomatic circles on the Continent that are not influenced by a dread of France, the preparations now making, not against that country, but against its *vile Usurper*, and the great disturber of mankind, are of the most formidable description, and such as may well appal the tyrant, and make him tremble at the consequences. These reports state, that three hundred and fifty thousand Austrians, two hundred and fifty thousand Russians, and forty thousand Swedes, are ready to commence operations. Of these armies, it is said, that one hundred thousand Austrians, and an equal number of Russians, are to be employed on the Rhine; two hundred thousand Austrians, and sixty thousand Russians in Italy and Switzerland. The forty thousand Swedes and an equal number of Russians are said to be destined to re-take Hanover; and, according to the same reports, a British army will at the same time make an attack on Holland, where they are not likely to have any but French to oppose them, as the Dutch have suffered too much under their oppressors to be likely to assist in their cause, and, in fact, to oppose their own deliverance. If we were to credit other continental rumours, which are indeed strongly prevalent, we should be induced to think that even the Turks are to co-operate in the grand attempt to rescue Europe from the grip of an ambitious Usurper, who seems desirous to monopolize the government of all states, and who has therefore made it a common cause with all states to attempt his destruction. A part of the grand plan now in agitation is, it is understood, to invade Spain in different points, in order to induce the Spanish Monarch to declare himself against the Corsican yoke, which he is said to be very willing to do. In the midst of all these reports, it is natural to find some accounts of intended movements in favour of the unfortunate House of Bourbons; and it is accordingly said;

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" that a large body of Russians and other troops are to attempt some vulnerable part of France, headed by a Bourbon Prince, in the name of Louis XVIII. the rightful King of France, the ally of England, Russia, Austria, Sweden, and Turkey, against the Usurper of his throne and the oppressor of his subjects. His most Christian Majesty, it is also confidently said, is to be furnished with the means of raising a formidable army, and that he is to issue a proclamation to inform his subjects that their deliverance approaches, if they are willing to be rescued from disgrace, misery, and despotism."—However wild this is, and however contemptible the vehicle, through which it is conveyed to the public, it is well worthy of our attention, seeing that it certainly comes from those, to whose hands, unfortunately for us, the management of our affairs is committed. The public do not know, but, upon occasions like this, they ought to be informed, that the ostensible proprietor, or conductor, of the SUN newspaper never thinks of inserting an article upon a subject of this kind, unless he receives it from the Treasury, whither he goes *for orders*, as regularly as a letter-carrier goes to the Post-Office. This is no exaggeration at all. It is a plain statement of a fact well-known to every person in London connected with the press. By way of censuring this intercourse the fact is not mentioned here; but, for the purpose of the better enabling the reader to judge of the probable views of the "heaven-born" minister and his colleagues. It must, however, not be concluded, that a plan of warfare, such as is described in the SUN, is the plan fixed on by Mr. Pitt; for, he has fixed on nothing, and he will fix on nothing. The articles in his prints ought, rather, to be regarded as mere suggestions, thrown out for the purpose of *feeling the pulse* of the nation; for the purpose of obtaining a knowledge as to what course will be most likely to be popular, or the least likely to excite great unpopularity, and to expose *the place* of the minister to danger. Seeing, however, that a plan, such as is suggested by the SUN, has in it something specific, at least, and, for that reason, by no means likely to be selected by Mr. Pitt, it is probable, that he finds himself likely to be *forced* into it, by the will of some one of the parties to the alliance, either abroad or at home. If so, the efforts of his writers are quite natural; though, it must, one would think, appear pretty evident to him, that those efforts will fail of success. It has before been shown, that, to all appearance, the quarrel between Alexander and

Napoleon has partly arisen from the latter having assumed the *title of Emperor*; and, this circumstance renders more probable the conjecture, that Mr. Pitt, with a view of obtaining allies upon the Continent, and thereby securing a subject upon which to vaunt at the opening of parliament, has been compelled to give into the project of a war against the person of Buonaparté. But, after all, would there be any reason for surprise, if we should, at last, find, that he himself had chosen this plan, as likely to afford the means of dividing the opinions, and of course, the votes, of the Opposition? If, however, this be his design, the scheme will certainly fail; for, if he could persuade those of the Burke school, that the case now stands, both as to *right* and to *expediency*, just as it stood in 1794, when we had made no acknowledgments whatever, when there was a well-known division amongst the people of France, and when there was actually embodied a powerful army of Royalists having exclusive possession of a considerable part of the kingdom: if he could persuade them to this, could he, after the woeful experience they have had of him, possibly persuade them again to trust the cause in hands like his? When he had, by his management of the war, reduced the nation to such a state, both of means and of mind, as to make them, with voice almost unanimous, hail as a blessing, the disgraceful, the ignominious, peace of Amiens; then, indeed, in the defence of that peace, and to gloss over his miserable failure in the war, he said: "there were *times*, during the war, in which the government hoped to be able to drive France within her ancient limits, and even to make barriers against her future incursions; but, in this we were disappointed; it became, then, necessary, with the change of circumstances, to change our objects; for, I do not know a more fatal error, than to look only at one object, and obstinately to pursue it, when the hope of accomplishing it no longer remains." And what was this new object? "indemnity for the past and security for the future." And this object, he assured us, was obtained. "An honourable and secure peace," said he, "has now been obtained." He told us, that he had destroyed the monster that once threatened our existence; and his "noble friend," Lord Belgrave, bade us, "now that we had escaped the dangers of the storm, look back upon the subsiding waves with emotions of calm delight and unspeakable satisfaction." . . . . "Turn your eyes," said he, "on your present happy situation, a

"the vessel of state, having now weathered the storm, riding in *triumph* and *security* in her native port; and, then say, whether some credit is not due to him, who has steered her uninjured through a sea so threatening, so awful, and so tempestuous." This sublime passage, upon which Mr. Canning's *pilot* was a paraphrase, was admirably accommodated to the times when it was uttered; but, together with the *birth-day celebration*, both have long since become subjects of something very different from admiration. The objects of the war were, however, thus got over for a while; there were not wanting men to assert, that Mr. Pitt had completely obtained the objects which he had always professed to have in view, and this assertion they had the profigate impudence to make, and to repeat, in the face of his recorded declarations and promises. "We are," said he, in his speech of the 7th of June, 1799, "in circumstances which forbid us to stop short, of an *adequate, full, and rational security*. The war may be carried on for *any length of time without the creation of a new debt*. It is by no means difficult to provide taxes for *eight years*. . . . We shall not be satisfied with *false security*. War, with all its evils, is better than a peace, in which there is nothing to be seen but injustice, dwelling with savage delight, on the humbled, prostrate condition of some timid, suppliant people. . . . The time to come to the discussion of a peace, can only be the time when you can look with confidence to an honourable issue; to such a peace as shall at once *restore to Europe her settled and balanced constitution of general polity*, and to every negotiating power in particular that weight in the scale of general empire, which has ever been found the best guarantee and pledge of local independence and general security. Such are *my* sentiments. I commit them to the thinking amongst mankind; and, if they have not been poisoned by the stream of French sophistry, and prejudiced by her falsehoods, I am sure they will approve of the *determination I have avowed*, and, for those *grave and mature reasons*, on which I found it." This, then, was his avowed object in the war. Avowed, too, less than two years before he assisted in the negotiation of the preliminaries of the peace of Amiens, *began on our side*, and with a French Commissary of Prisoners; such was our haste to "restore to Europe her settled and balanced constitution of general polity!" Was the object, above-described, obtained by the peace

of Amiens? Need I ask whether any part of it was obtained? Whether we obtained "an adequate, full, and rational security?" Whether the balance of Europe was restored? Whether we did not leave France, "dwelling with savage delight on the humbled, prostrate condition of some" [nay, some half-dozen] "timid, suppliant nations?" Let it be well remembered, that this declaration, this solemn promise, was made only about one-and-twenty months before the first overture was made to Mr. Otto, which overture led to a peace, which peace was, by all the adherents of Mr. Pitt, justified upon the ground of the "*necessity of husbanding our resources!*" Where, then, shall we look for the truth of that assertion, by which we were led to believe, that "the war could be carried on for any length of time without the creation of new debt?" Where, for that of the assurance, that "it would be by no means difficult to find taxes for eight years?" And, where for the grounds of *future reliance*, upon the calculations and promises of this minister? We have, in this avowal of Mr. Pitt's a test of his knowledge, his foresight, his wisdom as a statesman, and particularly as a financier. In June, 1799, he tells the besotted nation, that he can continue the war for "any length of time without the creation of new debt." Early the next year, 1800, he creates new debt, to the amount of 20 millions sterling (leaving out the parts of a million); early in 1801, he creates more new debt, to the amount of 27 millions sterling; and, in 1802, by way of a winder-up of the war, his place-holder creates more new debt, to the amount of 26 millions; and thus, the war, which might be carried on "for any length of time without the creation of new debt," causes him to create, in the next three years, new debt amounting to upwards of 73 millions sterling! And, even after this, and the thousands of other glaring proofs of the same sort, you hear his pensioned or place-hunting adherents calling him "the first financier in the world;" or, at least, you *heard* them; for, now, it must be confessed that they do, upon that topic, hold their tongues. — In the calculations, in the professions, in the declarations, in the promises, of such a minister, who can place any confidence? And yet, you shall see, that, if he should adopt something like the course pointed out by the SUN newspaper, and should treat the parliament with a repetition, though in the very same words, of his old professions about "checking the ambition of France," the "deliverance of Europe," "indea-

" nity for the past and security for the " future," and the like, his adherents will affect astonishment at seeing him opposed by those, who, like myself, formerly endeavoured to support him! The influence of this race of politicians is, however, fast drawing to a close. Thanks to the Tenth Report, the lacker is nearly all rubbed off from the " heaven-born" minister and his set, and the real quality of the metal is now perceptible to even the dullest eyes.—I should here have entered upon some further remarks upon the expectations, which appear to be founded upon the discontents, or imaginary discontents, existing against Buonaparté in France; but, just as I had proceeded thus far the SUN of the 3d instant reached me, containing another article upon the same subject, and which article, however unworthy of notice in itself, is, for the reasons before-mentioned, entitled to the serious consideration of the public. Before I insert it, it is necessary to observe, that the letter, to which it professes to be an answer, appeared in the Morning Chronicle of the 2d instant, under the signature of FABIUS. Some of the arguments in that letter had been, as the reader will perceive, before advanced in the Political Register; but, if he has the means of coming at the letter itself, he will find the whole of it well worth his perusal.—When I have inserted this new article, I shall offer a few remarks upon the particular point above-mentioned. I must beg leave to press the subject upon the attention of every one, into whose hands this sheet may happen to fall; for, to me it appears evident, that, if we proceed, if we build our hopes upon discontents in France, or, upon being able to stir up discontents in that country, we are fallen never again to rise. And, yet, it will be clearly perceived, that, as far as a judgment can be formed from the language of the ministerial prints, such is the foundation, upon which we are to build. " The " rumoured intention on the part of the allied powers of directing the war personally against the Usurper of France has drawn forth a long article from a writer in the chief opposition paper of yesterday, in which he seems to condemn such a measure as impolitic and impracticable. But a due consideration of the subject will shew that it is both politic and practicable. The French, as a people, have not provoked the other powers of Europe by insult or injury. All the insults and injuries which those powers have received have been the result of Buonaparté's irascible temper and his insatiable ambition. He has been

" the French people, though it is notorious that he was chosen by a very few of them, and that the rest were awed into silence by the severity of his police or his military force. Instead of conducting himself with grateful moderation for this concession on the part of other states, he has intruded upon their territories and seized them, one after another, upon those pretexts to which force, artifice, and tyranny always resort. All the forbearance of other states, too strong to fall within his grasp, has only augmented his pride and injustice, and he tramples upon the very people whom he professes to have rescued from slavery; though they endure it to a much greater degree than they ever suffered under the most arbitrary of their rightful Sovereigns. Where then is the impolicy of appealing to the people who are thus oppressed, against a tyrant who drags them into a war which arose from his own bad passions, and which those passions threaten to continue as long as he is permitted to enjoy the power which he so wickedly abuses?—But it is asked, in what manner are the people of France to testify their detestation of Buonaparté? That they feel a strong detestation against their tyrant nobody doubts, and though it would be difficult to throw off the yoke, while he has so powerful an army, yet it can hardly be doubted that the army partakes in a great degree of the general feeling of Frenchmen, and as they will be the chief sufferers by new wars, resulting from his ambition, they might be ready to aid the expression of the general will, if an appeal to the people of France against their oppressor seemed to make a strong impression on them. Buonaparté's host of generals would themselves be little inclined to support the cause of an Upstart who holds them at such a proud distance, though he chiefly depends upon them, if they were once to find the troops beginning to waver, and the general feelings of Frenchmen averse to their disgraceful bondage. How far Frenchmen in general might be inclined to return to their allegiance to their rightful Monarch is another question; but after all their disappointments, sufferings, and horrors, on what could they be expected to look for repose so securely as in the bosom of legitimate authority? The transfer of property which has taken place since the revolution would be but a subordinate impediment to the return of that authority, when opposed to the wishes of the great



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majority of the people: and though Buonaparté may be acknowledged to possess imposing talents, yet they are all of a crafty, selfish, and insidious kind: there is nothing respectable in his character; he is feared by all, and beloved by none—he has not one virtue that stands in the way of a return to allegiance, in a people who have suffered too much to be seduced by any more phantoms of liberty, which have only deluded them, and exposed them to one tyrant after another, till their chains are riveted by a military Upstart. But it is said, that if the allied powers should appeal to the people of France against him, he may retaliate with dreadful effect. The truth, however, is, that, as has been justly stated, Buonaparté himself set an example of such a kind of appeal in the instance of Sweden, and in his threats of such an appeal to the people of this country. So that, in fact, it would be a just retaliation on him for attempting to separate people and their lawful Sovereigns. But it is said, that the French people have been indebted to Buonaparté for a cessation of a state of things infinitely more horrible than external warfare; yet what has he done? He has only removed one set of tyrants to place another over them, of which he is the head; and the people, though relieved from the horrors of blood by which their streets were deluged, are held in the most bitter restraint, and hardly dare express their sentiments on any subject, lest they should be supposed to have an oblique relation to their government. Is this a condition that renders them so much indebted to Buonaparté that they must be in love with the fetters he imposes on them? We know that Robespierre held at one time as much power as Buonaparté does now, yet Tallien had the courage to proclaim him a tyrant, and his overthrow was soon effected. But if instead of a miscreant and a regicide, like Tallien, some honest military character, who had the confidence of the troops, and who felt like a true Frenchman, were boldly to step forward, after an appeal from the allied powers, and to second that appeal to the hearts, understandings, and national pride of the French against an odious and foreign Usurper, he and his upstart family might at once be blown away, like chaff before the tempest. We are told that Englishmen are grossly ignorant of both the merits and defects of Buonaparté's government in the eyes of Frenchmen. Are we to

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suppose that Frenchmen have lost their understanding with their spirit? Are we to suppose that they are utterly dead to all feeling? Do they not know that they are in the hands of a foreign Usurper and his band of myrmidons? Do they not know that France is large enough for all their wants, and, after so much trouble, misery, and horrors as they have endured, can they want to be precipitated into new wars, and dragged into military conscriptions to support these wars, when they are the effect of his pride, ambition, and injustice? Frenchmen, still smarting under the dreadful sufferings which they have experienced, and kept in awe by an iron yoke, may be reluctant to make a movement within, lest it should fail, and involve them, if possible, in more bitter slavery; but when they find that all Europe is in arms against their enslaver, and only wants to assist them in the recovery of their own rights, it would be to suppose that they are sunk into the most brutal degeneracy, or the most torpid indifference, if we did not expect them to rouze at an appeal calculated to restore them to tranquillity, and a resumption of those rights which are now trampled under-foot by an usurping despot. We do not pretend to say that such an appeal is actually intended, but from every impartial view which can be taken of the state of France, and the probable feelings and wishes of Frenchmen, it may be fairly concluded, that such an appeal would be attended with consequences that might indeed give a new system to the whole conduct of Europe, and have the most decisive influence on its future fortune," by rescuing it from the power and the threats of an aspiring and restless individual, and uniting all its states in peace and amity."—Such are the arguments intended to prove, that a war, directed against the person of Napoleon, is both "politic and practical." The impudent baseness of the Pitt newspapers, in now holding up as an object of abhorrence to Frenchmen the very government, which was, by the same papers, before declared to be the best that the people were capable of enjoying, was pointed out in the preceding sheet, page 343 and 344; but, it is right that the character of these prints should be well known, well established in the world; and, to this end we will now take in contrast the sentiments of the *SUN*, respecting Buonaparté and his government, in 1802, and in 1805.

1802.

That a love of liberty should lead to gross invectives against France, or its chief magistrate, is greatly to be lamented. Why direct the grossest invectives against him for doing that, which it remains yet to be proved is not an act beneficial to the French nation? Liberty in the hands of those who know not how to enjoy it, can only degenerate into anarchy, and the only remedy for anarchy is the strong arm of power. When the present government of France is compared with the monstrous systems of democratical, or of oligarchical tyranny which have preceded it, the people of France have certainly reason to congratulate themselves on the change.

1805.

Are we to suppose, that the people of France are dead to all feeling? Do they not feel, that they are in the hands of an upstart, foreign usurper, and his band of myrmidons? Do they not groan under the iron rod of his police, unparalleled in severity? And, when they find all Europe in arms against their enslaver, and wants only to assist them in the recovery of their own rights, it would be to suppose them sunk into the most brutal degeneracy, not to expect to join in the efforts to obtain relief.

This puts me in mind of the "Needy Knife Grinder and the Friend of Humanity," which latter, because he cannot rouse in the former a spirit of rebellion, vomits forth against him a string of most abusive appellations, concluding with "base, degenerate, "spiritless outcast." But, the "Friend of Humanity," seditious as he is represented, appears to be disinterested; whereas the print, above quoted, discovers selfishness the most detestable in the persons, under whose influence it is. While Buonaparté seemed inclined to remain at peace with this country; while he appeared inclined to suffer the shopkeepers and the shopkeeper statesmen to enjoy repose; to gormandize, to booze, and to cram their chests, he was a very good sort of a man; his portrait was exhibited from their windows, in the attitude of embracing their Sovereign; the flags of France and of England were entwined, and, when seen waving from the balloon of Garnerin, drew forth the plaudits of the gazing cockneys. Then Buonaparté's government was as good an one as the French people could bear; "liberty, in the hands of those "who knew not how to enjoy it," was an evil; and, it was laid down as an undeniable truth, that, on the change introduced by Buonaparté, the "people of France had reason to congratulate themselves." Now:—but, there is no need of repeating what is now said; and, we have only to ask ourselves, whether we think, that the people of France, or any persons having influence with them, are to be cajoled by professions

of a desire, on the part of the Pitts and their like, to restore them to a state of freedom? Can we believe, that the French are such brutes as not to perceive the cause of this change of sentiment, or, at least, of language, in the present foes of Buonaparté? "When they find all Europe in arms against "their enslaver, and wants only to assist "them in the recovery of their own rights." Excessive kind! the French will exclaim; but, how came you to acknowledge, to sanction, to establish, the sway of this our "enslaver?" How came you, the Pitts and Addingtons, to receive colonies at his hands, and to hold those colonies as part of the British dominions? How came you to enter into a solemn treaty with him, promising strictly to observe all the obligations of peace and amity, and going out of the usual course of such compacts, for the purpose of making a provision for the surrender of all those, who might escape to England or her dependencies after having committed acts of violence against his life? How came you to bring to trial, and to convict, as of a great crime, a French royalist, whom you charged with endeavouring to instigate us to acts of violence and rebellion against this our "enslaver;" this "upstart," this "foreign usurper," this "gloomy despot," as you now call him? Is it not upon the records of your offices of state; of your parliament; of your courts of justice; that Buonaparté, even previous to our electing him as our Emperor and settling the crown on his family, was our lawful ruler? And, is it for you now to call upon us; now that you find him dangerous to yourselves, and are in terror of your lives at his name; is it for you, and after such a length of time, and such a series of events, to call upon us to rise against him and to take his life; and this, too, under the pretext, that you "want only "to assist us in the recovery of our own "rights?"—Is there a man so infatuated as not to perceive, that these will be the questions, which all France will put, in answer to any invitation that shall be given them to rebel against Napoleon? The case is so plain; it is so evident, that the object is to make mere tools of the people of France in pulling down Buonaparté, and thereby relieving the instigators from the dread they have of him, that the man who expects to deceive them must himself be little short of an ideot. The people of France well know, that Napoleon has augmented their territory and their power; they well know, that all Europe, and particularly the nation they most wish to overcome, trembles at his name. And, is there any one, but a stupid,

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hoodwinked Pittite, who can imagine that the people of France will be induced to hate Buonaparté for this? This point has been ably treated by the writer in the Morning Chronicle; and, as the reader will have perceived, nothing has been advanced in answer to him. The SUN has, indeed, once observed, that, as to objects of ambition, there is no *common feeling* between the people of France and Buonaparté; but, is not such a position directly in the teeth of reason? Does not every Frenchman feel, that he has an interest, a share, in all the achievements of Buonaparté? Can this man do any thing without the people of France? Is not a love of domination the passion known to be uppermost in every Frenchman's breast? And will the French, then, be induced to kill, or to cashier him, merely because they are persuaded that he is upon the eve of making them the masters of the world? Will they be induced to put him down, and to put an end to their own favourite career, in order that the inhabitants of London may carry on their commerce in peace and safety, and may thereby be enabled to out-shine the inhabitants of Paris?— But, we are reminded of the severity of the government of Buonaparté, and of the unbearable rapacity of his upstart underlings. As to the severity of his government, the observations in the SUN of 1802 may serve as a tolerably good answer; but, we may add thereunto, that with respect to *the fact*, when have we heard of any instance of the severity here imagined? That his government is despotic; that it is a rigid despotism; that it permits nothing worthy of the name of liberty, civil or political, we well know; but is this any *new* thing to the people of France? Have they, in reality, ever shown, that they set any value upon liberty, or that they had any clear notion of its nature? Voltaire has said of them, that they must have *a master*; “*a master*,” says he, “*good or bad they must and will have*.” He knew them very well; and, if we proceed upon the opinion of their disposition having undergone a change, we shall find ourselves woefully mistaken.—With respect to “*the rapacity of the upstart underlings of Buonaparté*,” we can easily conceive, that it is great enough; but, we must not, therefore, conclude that it is “*unbearable*.” He may, for aught I know to the contrary, have collected from amongst the most base, amongst the very scum of Frenchmen, persons to load with emoluments and with titles; he may have introduced scores of such reptiles into the legislative bodies, and into the councils of state; he may, as it were

on purpose to degrade the idea of nobility and gentry, have taken footmen, butlers, petty clerks, apothecaries' apprentices, shopkeepers, and money-lenders, and set them up as the law-givers and rulers of the people; he may, in order to gratify the rapacity of these his creatures, and, in order to obtain the means of silencing others by pensions or gifts or loans or jobs or contracts or by any other of the methods in which corruption is administered, have, for aught I know, ground the people down by a system of taxation, that ransacks the houses, the purses, the very hearts and minds of the people, and that, in fact, leaves no man any thing that he can, with propriety, call his own; as the natural consequence of such measures, he may have augmented, many-fold, the paupers of unhappy France; may have rendered all the poor the working slaves of the rich, and all the rich his stewards, his collectors, his degraded though glittering dependents; and may thus, under the name of liberty, have introduced a system of slavery, which, politically considered, yields to none that the world ever witnessed. All these things he may have done, and, if he have, I allow, that he merits universal execration; but, as to the *effect* of these things *upon the minds of the people*, let the reader reflect a little, and then say, whether he thinks that they are absolutely “*unbearable*;” whether he thinks, that it follows, of course, that the people will feel and express a suitable degree of indignation against the author of them; whether he thinks, that it requires merely to hold up a finger to excite them to open rebellion against such a ruler; or whether he thinks, that, when corruption has once become prevalent in a country, every fresh exercise of it gives to the ruler power more than proportioned to the discontent which it excites amongst the people; and, if he should be, as I think he must, of this latter opinion, he will, of course, derive very little hope from the discontents excited in France, by the rapacity of Buonaparté's upstart underlings, and the consequent oppression exercised by their chief.—Should, however, the dispositions of the people of France, be, in this respect, different from what reason teaches us to expect, still, as was observed about a year ago, how would the instigators against Buonaparté, or, in other words, the instigators to a *counter-revolution*, now overcome the effect of the transfer of honours, of offices, and of property? “*The transfer of property*,” says the writer above quoted, “*would be but a subordinate*

"impediment to the return of the Bourbons." This is an instance, a striking instance of that shallowness, which invariably marks the writings and speeches of the Pitt school. Do they consider? Is it possible, that they can have considered? that they can ever, for only one minute, have thought upon the nature and extent of the transfer here spoken of, and which includes all the peculiar rights of the nobility and the clergy, besides no small portion of the real estates of the country? Suppose (for there is nothing like bringing the question close to our own bosoms) suppose, that, by any change of system in England, the *game laws*, the *tithes*, and all the *manorial* rights (exercised here in a very limited degree compared to the exercise of them in France) were to be abolished; suppose every man thus to become possessed of the right of hunting and shooting; every land-owner to acquire an addition of ten per cent. in the value of his land, and every tenant, having a lease, to be freed from so much of charge upon his land; every copy-holder to be freed from the charge of fines, heriots, and the like, and, in short, suppose every copy-holder and every trespassing cottager to become, at once, a freeholder. Suppose such an event were to take place in England; will any man say, that the transfer even of this much of property would form a "*subordinate impediment*" to the return of the former state of things? A wise politician would see in the re-transfer nothing ultimately injurious even to the parties possessing the species of property here spoken of; but, men in general do not extend their enquiries so far; and, it would be wonderful indeed, if, after the lapse of fifteen years, all such possessors were not hostile to the return of the authority, under which they had before lived. But, besides what we have been speaking of, the real property of France, to the amount of more than one-third part, has changed masters; and is now held by the same tenure, considered with respect to the Bourbons, that Napoleon holds the sceptre. A manifesto in favour of the Bourbons would, in fact, be a manifesto against them; and, though there was a time, when such a step might, and, in all human probability, would, have been attended with success; is there any one who can hope, that that time is not passed? Since the peace of Amiens, and in consequence of that peace, too, a new *Gallican Church*, has been erected, and has now received all the strength that every thing but time can communicate to it. The new nobility is not a very solid

fabric; but it consists of ambitious, active, and daring men, who value their pre-eminence not the less for having once been amongst the lowest of mankind; and, in the numerous legion of whom there is, perhaps, not one who would be ready to say, with an effeminate, luxurious, and degenerate wretch, whom we have all heard of, that he "would rather be a *young chimney-sweeper* than an *old Duke*." Aware of the constant endeavours of the adherents of the Treasury, to ascribe all the opinions of their opponents merely to a desire of thwarting the views of the ministry, I shall here repeat what I was led (in some remarks upon the pretended plot at Warsaw) to say upon this subject, about a year ago;\* "The truth is, I fear, Napoleon is firmly fixed in his throne, if not in the hearts of the French nation, whose ruling passion is a love of the glory of France, and in the indulgence of which passion they are abundantly gratified by their present ruler. They love splendour too, and splendour he seems determined to give them. If there be another thing which they required to keep them in constant good humour, it is the prospect of invading, ruining, and subduing this country; that to he has given them. Buonaparté is no longer the adventurer he was previous to Mr. Addington's peace: he has, since that time, settled the affairs of the church; he has erected a legion of honour, which, however it may be laughed at, will yield him a support that few monarchs can expect from their nobles. He who has with him the church, the aristocracy, and the army, has very little to fear from what man can do unto him; how firmly, then, must he be fixed, when it is well known that all these must live or perish with himself? when all men in power and place, and when no small portion of the holders of real property, know that their rank and influence and possessions are held by the same tenure that Napoleon wears the imperial crown?—For these reasons I am inclined to think, that the French government never employed any body to poison Louis XVIII., being perfectly indifferent as to the life or death of that monarch, having but too certain an assurance, that his cause would never be manfully and efficiently espoused by the great powers of Europe, and reposing a perfect confidence in the effect of that change which the last sixteen years have produced in the minds of the people of France. In

\* Register, Vol. VI. p. 430.

speaking of the sentiments of the French people, and particularly of their attachment to the family of Bourbon, we but too often overlook this important circumstance. Those who are now thirty years of age, were only fourteen when the French revolution began, and when notions hostile to the Bourbons began to be generally imbibed; and, we have only to look at a regiment of soldiers to be convinced, that it is upon men of five or six years on each side of thirty, that, in military countries especially, the fate of government must generally depend. As towards their rulers, the present active population of France presents a new race of men; and it must be evident, that every year will weaken those feelings from which one might hope to derive some aid in the restoration of the royal family, and which, in the early part of the last war might have been turned to such glorious account."—These reasons are now stronger, much stronger, than they were a year ago. They are, indeed, so convincing, that it is truly surprising to find persons still entertaining a hope of being able to overset Buonaparté by the means of a counter-revolution! The partiality for such a scheme arises, as I have frequently had to observe, from the effeminacy of the times, from that disinclination to real warlike exertions, which disinclination is naturally engendered in a state absorbed in commerce; and, the readers of the Register will, I am sure, do me the justice to say, that to remove this disinclination, and to produce a conviction, that we had nothing to hope for but from our own exertions, and particularly that we had nothing to hope for from discontents in France, has been my constant endeavour. So long ago, as November, 1802, in alluding to the reports then circulated in the London newspapers, respecting the unpopularity of Buonaparté, the following remarks were made, and I now repeat them, not so much in proof of my own consistency, as with a hope that my words may now meet with a more favourable hearing, and make a stronger impression than they did then. "Buonaparté has returned to Paris, safe and sound, in spite of the prayers and predictions of the timid herd, who were in hopes of losing their fears in his loss of life. There are none but the basest of cowards, who look to the death of this man as a deliverance from danger. Yet, disgraceful as is the fact, the hopes of no small portion of the advocates of peace have no better, no more honourable, foundation. Those who, like ourselves, were opposed

"to a disgraceful peace with Buonaparté, do not, nor ever did, entertain any such foolish hope; we know that if he were dead to-morrow, another, perhaps even more dangerous, would arise to fill his place: we are for the employment of no base means of offence or of defence, but are for a fair and honourable contest between the two nations, in which, with God's good help, we should hope to come off victorious, and to rescue our country from impending ruin and slavery.—The Consul has been received at the several places which he visited on his tour, with every demonstration of joy; precisely such as we could wish to see accompany the steps of our gracious Sovereign.—People may say what they please about the hypocrisy of this joy; we, for our part think it perfectly sincere, and, what is more, we see no reason why it should not be so. We have nothing to say against those meek and unambitious persons, who sicken at the sound of military fame and national conquests; but, we must confess, that, for our parts, we should not like a leader the worse, for having extended our sway over one half of Europe, added ten millions to our population, and humbled our rival in the dust.—No, no; such a man may be hated by the Addingtons and Hawkesburies, and by all those who dread the increase of his power, but not by the people of France, not by those, the advancement of whose glory (which is inseparable from its own) is the only object of his life."\*—In p. 717 of the same volume, it was observed: "It is your bawlers for peace and plenty, upon any terms; your philanthropic haters of all war; your men who would rather be kicked a little than fight much;" these are the men (if, indeed, they are worthy of the name), who would gladly contribute half-a-crown a piece to purchase the death of the Consul; not because he is the enemy of their Sovereign and of the glory and independence of their country, but because his restless and ambitious mind may conceive such projects as will deprive them of their wealth or compel them to defend it. The very same motives of selfishness and cowardice, which led them to embrace Buonaparté with open arms, would also lead them, if they could do it with the certitude of impunity, to slip a dagger into his side." Such I saw them; such I saw the shop-keeping herd long before this war began; and, whether I saw them in

their true light the reader will, from their subsequent conduct, be able pretty correctly to judge. They hate Buonaparté because he will make them fight for their liberty, or will have them for his slaves. This I have told Sir Balaam twenty times over; and, I have told him besides, what he and his race will find most true, that the age of commerce, of corruption, of effeminacy, of luxury, and of cowardice, are passing away; and that the military age is again coming. It has, indeed, actually begun. I repeat, that the soldier is abroad, and that he will have his share of the good things that the world affords. Sir Balaam may cry; but neither crying nor *subscribing* will long save him. Our choice is a very simple one; very clearly marked out: either we become a military people, or we become the slaves of France. Not a *volunteering people*; not a set of reeling shop-keepers making a shew of arms under such commanders as Colonel Pitt, Colonel Canning, and Colonel Huskisson; but a people really military; and, to become such we must at once resolve, in spite of the tears and howlings of Sir Balaam, to transfer to camps that vast portion of the produce of the land and the labour of the nation, which is now swallowed up by the slothful though crafty drones of the 'Change. This is where we ought to begin; for, until we have well begun here, all our alliances and plots are useless, and never will bring us so much as one hour of tranquillity.—

[The other topics intended for the present sheet must be deferred till the next. I cannot, however, refrain from making use of this last line of room to request the reader's attention to a *SECOND LETTER OF FABIUS*, which will be found in the Morning Chronicle of the 4th instant, upon the subject above treated of. It is an admirable performance; and I greatly regret, that my arrangements for this week do not leave me room for its insertion.]

*Botley, Thursday,  
29th August, 1805.*

### BOXING.

The following extract is taken from a work recently published, entitled, "On the Use and Abuse of Popular Sports and Exercises, resembling those of the Greeks and Romans, as a national Object." By S. A. BRADSLEY, M. D. Vice-President of the Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society."

—Having, as the readers of the Political Register will have observed, lately made some remarks upon the subject of *Boxing*, I am induced to insert this extract in the hope of its tending greatly to strengthen whatever degree of effect my arguments may have

been so fortunate as to produce. Those who have not read the remarks, to which I refer, will find them in p. 193, and the following, of the present volume. Mr. Bradsley's facts are valuable. I should like to hear what can be urged against us. Is there no son of cant; no worshipful member of the Vice-Society; no modern *HUDIBRAS*; no

" — Tail of worship that doth grow

" On rump of justice, as on cow;"

is there no such hero to encounter us?—Mr. B. does not seem to approve of *prize fighting*; but, of that hereafter.]

It is not compatible with the limits of this essay to notice the variety of bodily exercises and active sports to which the people of England are generally addicted. But there is one kind of personal contest, to the consideration of which the remaining part of these remarks will be chiefly devoted, as it has been the source of obloquy and reprobation among foreigners, to the national character. The public exhibition of boxing, and the practice of the same art in deciding private and personal quarrels, are here alluded to.—Is not the art of boxing, by which instantaneous insult may be avenged, or personal injury averted, less dangerous than any other practice adopted by the inhabitants of the continent on similar occasions and for similar purposes?—The question is an important one; and the following facts and observations may serve, perhaps, to apologize for, if they cannot justify, a custom so interwoven with our national manners and character.—So long as man is subject to the imperfection of his nature, he must be compelled to acquire the art of self-defence, as well as that of annoyance to others. Our experience of his conduct and character, teaches us the impossibility of extinguishing the passions of pride and resentment, which, although they frequently involve him in misery, are still the sources of some of his noblest qualities and attributes. As some portion of evil will attach to the best and wisest system of moral or civil restraint; that policy is, perhaps, the wisest, which legislates for man as he is, not altogether as he ought to be. Suffer the passions to reign uncontrolled, and you dissolve the bonds of society: stifle the active energies of a resolute independent spirit, and you degrade the man into a passive slave. The feeling of resentment for unprovoked injury and insult is a salutary, if not instinctive provision of our common nature. It may be asked—

" Is man then to be the judge and avenger of his own wrongs? Is not every offence against the person of a citizen a breach of the laws of society? And should it not be

\$73] punished a in the best practicable asserting own real comes a most pre enabled to unjustly b means of perly rank which, at dress and rage and f deed lead of presum propensity and courag the means would lea of each oth to undue rvernmenttic and s exertions o exercise o spect to rul vengeful s expression repressed; malignant encouraged prospect of lute domini And if it observation act consist hatchets, a upon a suc fearful pov —If we countries, shall find, ries, resort full of dan stiletto is n assassin, bu of the resp the heart o any sudden tive of rev

\* In an of the late of 1000 Rome to the hired a Moore rec Naples, by annually.

[373] punished as such?"—Certainly:—But if, in the best regulated states, it be found impracticable to prevent man from frequently asserting a claim to the vindication of his own real or supposed wrongs, it then becomes a question of expediency as to the most preferable mode by which he may be enabled to obtain this end. Boxing may not unjustly be considered as the most eligible means of offence and defence. It is properly ranked among those athletic exercises, which, at the same time that they impart address and strength to the body, inspire courage and fortitude in the mind. It may indeed lead bad hearts and bad heads into acts of presumption and petty tyranny; but this propensity to an improper exertion of skill and courage would be checked, in proportion as men were more equally possessed of the means of defence or aggression. They would learn to respect the skill and bravery of each other, and consequently be less prone to undue resentment and quarrels. The government that would attempt, with a despotic and severe authority, to control the exertions of self-confidence, and a moderate exercise of just resentment, could only expect to rule over a nation of timid and revengeful slaves. The open and ingenuous expression of manly indignation might be repressed; but the rancorous feelings of malignant revenge would be fostered and encouraged. But no state can, with any prospect of success, attempt such an absolute dominion over the passions of men. And if it did, "it must (according to the observation of a spirited author) in order to act consistently, prohibit the use of knives, hatchets, and even pokers; for any of these, upon a sudden emergency, might impart a fearful power to the enraged and the feeble."—If we consider the practice of other countries, where boxing is unknown, we shall find, that the modes of resenting injuries, resorted to by the common people, are full of danger and ferocity. In \* Italy, the stiletto is not only the weapon of the hired assassin, but is also kept ready in the bosom of the respectable citizen, to be plunged into the heart of his friend or neighbour, upon any sudden provocation from anger, or motive of revenge.—When the passions are

under greater restraint, from the influence of laws, of climate, and of custom, such dreadful consequences do not ensue from the quarrels of the populace.\* Yet even in France, and most parts of Germany, the quarrels of the people are determined by a brutal appeal to force, directed in any manner, however perilous, to the annoyance or destruction of an adversary. Sticks, stones, and every dangerous kind of weapon, are resorted to for the gratification of passion or revenge. But the most common and savage method of settling quarrels upon the continent is the adoption of the Pancratium. The parties close, and struggle to throw each other down; at the same time the teeth and nails are not unemployed. In short, they tear † each other like wild beasts, and never desist from the conflict till their strength is completely exhausted; and thus, regardless of any established laws of honour which teach forbearance to a prostrate foe, their cruelty is only terminated by their inability to inflict more mischief. And yet superficial observers, and especially all foreigners who have written concerning our customs and manners, loudly brand the English character with savage rudeness and brutality, because they have seen men terminate their quarrels by an appeal to boxing; in which the parties are not permitted to take an unfair advantage of each other, but when one is disposed to yield, the combat immediately closes, and the conqueror and the vanquished

\* The mode of fighting in Holland, among the seamen and others, is well known by the appellation of Snicker-Snee. In this contest sharp knives are used; and the parties frequently maim, and sometimes, destroy each other. The government deems it necessary to tolerate this savage practice. Certain fines are imposed if wounds be inflicted on dangerous parts of the body; but a very trifling, and indeed seldom any punishment ensues, provided the general rules of the combat have been adhered to.

† In Virginia and the other southern states of America, the most savage acts of barbarity are committed, in the quarrels of the people. Gouging; or thrusting out the eye from the socket, is one of the means resorted to upon almost every personal dispute. An intelligent traveller, Mr. Weld, declares, that at Richmond in Virginia, it was nothing uncommon to meet with persons deprived of one or both eyes from this horrid practice.—He mentions another mode to disable an antagonist, so detestably barbarous, as to excite incredulity, if the account had not been corroborated by other writers.

\* In an authentic publication of the life of the late Pope, it is affirmed, that upwards of 1000 persons annually fall victims in Rome to the stiletto; either by the hands of the hired assassin, or in private quarrels. Dr. Moore reckons the number of murders in Naples, by the dagger, at not less than 400 annually.

are often seen to give and receive a hearty shake of the hand, in token of mutual goodwill and forgiveness. In no instance does the manly, spirited, and generous character of Britons, rise to a higher pitch, than in this alacrity almost universally shewn by the most ignorant and lowest order of the people, to terminate their personal contests, in a kindly and honourable manner. The mind indeed is thus relieved at once from the brooding mischief of malice and revenge. For, when the idea of self-consequence has been maintained, in courageously supporting the contest, man is better satisfied with himself and others, and consequently more likely to dismiss his ill-will and resentments. In order to foster manly fortitude and vigour, and to prevent the mischiefs arising from the irregular and brutal exertions of strength and ferocity, would it not be advisable to encourage the art of boxing with mufflers, as a subordinate branch of the gymnastic exercises?—It is a singular though striking fact, that in those parts of the kingdom where the generous and manly system of pugilism is least practised, and where, for the most part, all personal disputes are decided by the exertion of savage strength and ferocity, a fondness for barbarous and bloody sports is found to prevail. In some parts of Lancashire bull-baiting and man-slaying are common practices. The knowledge of pugilism *as an art* is, in these places, neither understood nor practised. There is no established rule of honour to save the weak from the strong, but every man's life is at the mercy of his successful antagonist. The object of each combatant in these disgraceful contests, is, to throw each other prostrate on the ground, and then with hands and feet, teeth and nails, to inflict, at random, every possible degree of injury and \* torment. This is not an exag-

\* A disgusting instance of this ferocious mode of deciding quarrels, was not long since brought forward at the Manchester sessions. It appeared in evidence, that two persons, upon some trifling dispute, at a public house, agreed to lock themselves up in a room with the landlord and "fight it out" according to the Bolton method. This contest lasted a long time, and was only terminated by the loss of the greatest part of the nose and a part of an ear, belonging to one of the parties, which were actually bitten off by the other, during the fight. The sufferer exhibited at the trial, part of the ear so torn off; and when asked by the counsel, what had become of that part of his nose which was missing—he replied—with per-

gerated statement of the barbarism still prevailing in many parts of this kingdom. The county assizes for Lancashire afford too many convincing proofs of the *increasing mischiefs arising* from these savage and disgraceful combats.—The judges, on these occasions, have frequently declared in the most solemn and impressive charges to the grand jury, that the number of persons indicted for murder, or manslaughter, in consequence of the bestial mode of fighting practised in this county, far exceeded that of the whole northern + circuit; and that, in future, they were determined to punish with the utmost rigour of the law, offenders of this description. But, alas! these just denunciations *have little availed*. Is it not then highly probable, that the evil which the severity of the law has been unable to correct, might be gradually and effectually abolished, or at least greatly mitigated, by the encouragement of a more manly, and less dangerous mode of terminating the quarrels of the populace? In the southern parts of this kingdom very rarely (and then chiefly in pitched battles for gain) is there any danger to life or limb from the practice of fair boxing. If then in the public schools and large manufactories of Lancashire, where immense numbers of boys are under the entire control of their masters and employers, some pains were taken to introduce the manly system of boxing, and the laws of honour, by which it is regulated, there can scarcely be room to doubt, but that the life of man would be more respected, barbarous propensities subdued, and the present character of the country rescued from the stigma of savage rudeness. It has been asserted, by those qualified to judge, that since the late diffusion of the knowledge of the pugilistic art by itinerant practitioners among the northern inhabitants of this kingdom, the mere exertions of brutal strength and ferocity have somewhat fallen into disuse, both as exercises of pastime, as well as means of offence and defence. In order, therefore, to abolish all traces of the savage mode of con-

flict naïveté.—"That he believed his antagonist had swallowed it!!" It has happened to the writer of these remarks to witness, in more than one instance, the picking up in the streets, lacerated portions of ears and fingers, after these detestable and savage broils. Surely either our laws or manners might interfere in suppressing such deeds of savage barbarity!

+ At one assizes, no less than nine persons were convicted of manslaughter, originating from these disgraceful encounters.

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[377] test which has been so fully described, would it not be adviseable to hold forth *prizes* at *wakes* and public amusements, (where the populace assemble chiefly for the purpose of diversion and pastime) for the encouragement of those, who excelled in *sparring with mufflers?* This trial of skill, force, and agility (which was at first the practice of the ancients) would contribute, under due regulations, to invigorate the body and animate the courage; and effectually abolish the present dangerous and inhuman method of deciding personal contests.

#### AUSTRIA AND FRANCE.

[The following article has been circulated on the Continent, as comprehending the principal complaints alleged by the Court of Vienna against the government of France.] —The occupation of Hanover, of the Papal States, and of the Kingdom of Naples, as well as the Helvetian Republic, contrary to the treaties of Ratisbon and Luneville; the incorporation of Piedmont with the French Empire; the invasion of the German Empire by the seizure of the Duke d'Enghien on the territory of the Elector of Baden; the seizure of several islands on the Rhine, which, according to the Treaty of Ratisbon, belonged to the German Empire; the demand, or rather threat, to occupy all the sea ports in Dalmatia, and in the *ci-devant* Venetian States, during the present war; the demand or menace to occupy the capital of the Kingdom of Naples, all its forts and sea-ports; the occupation of all the sea-ports of the Kingdom of Etruria; the incorporation of Parma and Placenza with France, contrary to the secret articles of the treaty of Luneville; the imperious demands to the Courts of Vienna and Naples to exclude all British and Russian ships from their respective harbours; the late imperious demand to occupy the sea-ports in the Island of Sicily; the creation of a new kingdom in Italy, contrary to the secret articles of the treaty of Luneville; the incorporation of Geroa with the French Empire, contrary to the secret articles of the treaty of Luneville; the evasive and insolent answer given to the representations of Count Cobentzel, Ambassador from the Emperor of Germany; and the insulting language held by the Chief of the French government to all the representations of his Majesty the Emperor of Germany and Austria.

#### FOREIGN OFFICIAL PAPER.

**NAVAL ACTION.**—*Letter from Vice-Admiral Villeneuve to the Minister of Marine and Colonies, dated on board the Bu-*

*centaure, in the Road of Vigo, July 29, 1805.*

MONSIEUR,—I gave you an account of the rencontre I had on the 22d with an English squadron composed, as I believe, of 15 sail of the line. I had the honour of informing you at the same time of the manœuvres I practised to retain the advantage of the wind, and to disconcert the project of the enemy for placing my rear between two fires. The fog, with which we were enveloped during the action, prevented me from giving such orders as might be necessary; but after an action of three hours, I had every reason to think that I had the advantage of the action, when upon the fog clearing up, I missed two of the Spanish ships. I at first flattered myself that they had got into some Spanish port, but as I have not since heard of them, and as one of them was dismasted, I think it possible they may have fallen into the power of the enemy. It was in vain that on the 23d and 24th, I endeavoured to force the English admiral to renew the action; he constantly avoided it. On the 26th, having lost sight of him, I steered for Ferrol, to unite under my flag his Catholic Majesty's squadron, commanded by Lieut. General Grandileana. For two days I contended against a fresh N. E. wind and a heavy sea, which impeded my course so much that I determined to anchor in Vigo, in order to disembark the wounded, and some of the soldiers who were ill; and also to take in water, which the Achilles and the Algesiras in particular stood in need of, not having remained long enough in the Antilles to take any in. In the action of the 22d, we engaged at a considerable distance, and I send you a list of the killed and wounded, which is very inconsiderable. Your excellency may be assured that I shall remain but a short time in this road, and that as soon as I have taken in water, I shall go in search of the English squadron, without, however, neglecting the mission with which I am charged. As the English admiral who engaged me has certainly three of his vessels rendered unfit to keep the sea, I do not think he can have more than twelve with him. I cannot praise too highly the skill and the noble conduct of Admiral Gravina. All the Spanish vessels fought with the utmost bravery; but I am still at a loss to comprehend how it was that we lost the two ships that are missing. Nevertheless, your excellency will perceive, that the two disabled vessels might fall into the enemy's line, without its being in my power to secure them. I beg you will assure the Emperor that I did my utmost to attack the enemy again; that I

obstinately pursued them, and that they constantly declined the action. I cannot too highly praise my captains and crews. I have the honour to be, &c.—VILLENEUVE.—[Then follows an account of the killed and wounded, amounting to 55 killed and 116 wounded.]

*Vice-Admiral Villeneuve to the Ministry of Marine. Vigo, July 31, 1805.*

I am now under way. I leave here two Spanish ships, and the French ship l'Atlas. These vessels have not suffered much in the action, but they sail badly, and I consider them as rather likely to delay the squadron than to reinforce it. I have disembarked here my sick. The length of the voyage, and the bad weather, has caused a sickness amongst the troops. But those who have nothing but the scurvy are in no danger, and will soon be restored by air and fresh provisions. I shall set out with 15 ships, of which two are Spanish, and if we have any affair on our voyage to Ferrol with the squadron which we have already fought, we have nothing to fear.—VILLENEUVE.

*Rear-Admiral Gourdon to the Ministry of Marine and Colonies. Ferrol, August 2, 1805.*

MY LORD,—I have the honour to announce to your excellency, that Admirals Villeneuve and Gravina have this moment anchored at Corunna. The English squadron re-appeared two days ago; it consisted of 13 ships of the line, but immediately on seeing the squadron of Rear-Admiral Villeneuve, it sailed again. It had, however, nothing to fear from the combined squadron in Ferrol, the wind being West, and blowing fresh, which rendered it impossible for us to set out. We are all animated by an ardent desire to give his Majesty proofs of our devotion for him, and our desire of enterprise for the glory of his flag.—GOURDON.

SPANISH ACCOUNT OF THE LATE ACTION.  
*From the Madrid Gazette.—Letter from Lieutenant-General Don Frederico Gravina to the Most Excellent Generalissimo the Prince of Peace, from Vigo, dated July 28, in the following terms.*

Most Excellent Sir, my Lord,—On the 22d July, Cape Finisterre bearing S. E. distant 25 leagues, the combined squadron was standing with the wind W.N.W. formed in three lines to the E. S. E. the horizon being covered with thick fogs. At noon the look-out vessels made the signal of having discovered 21 sail in the N.N.E. and that the greater part were of the line. We immediately formed the line-of-battle to larboard, the Spanish squadron forming the

van, with myself at the head, and the French Admiral in the centre of the line. The enemy, consisting of sixteen sail of the line, three of which were three-deckers, and two cut-downs, stood on the contrary tack, with the intention, as it appeared, of cutting off our rear; to avoid which, the French Admiral made the signal to wear, and stand on the opposite tack, which was immediately obeyed. The last ship of the rear being covered, the Argonauta, on board of which I had hoisted my flag, began the action with the van of the English, (at a quarter before five o'clock) who, upon account of the fog, had not perceived the movement we had executed. The enemy's squadron hauled their wind, and a very warm action immediately commenced, within half cannon-shot between our van and the whole of the enemy's line, which successively extended itself to the centre of our line. The fog was so thick, that notwithstanding our proximity, we at times lost sight of them. The fire was very well kept up during the action. We saw a three-decker without her fore-mast, and another vessel without her main and mizen-mast. The battle continued with our van and centre until past nine o'clock, when the enemy bore up, and the action ceased. On the morning of the 23d, at break of day, although the weather was still foggy, we found that two of our ships were missing, and that they were the San Rafael and the Firme. We discovered the enemy on the other tack; we immediately formed the line, and chased, having remarked that they had three dismasted ships in tow, and that their line consisted of only thirteen ships of war, including one dismasted of its fore-topmast. We continued the chase the whole day without avail, as the enemy manoeuvred to avoid a second encounter. The same took place on the 24th, on the morning of which day we saw them to windward crowding all sail, and close hauled, with the wind from the N. E. On the 25th, at day-break, the wind blowing fresh from the N. E. we were out of sight of the enemy; and, during the day, we saw Cape Finisterre bearing due east. In this situation, with the wind against our getting into Ferrol, many of the French ships having only six days water on board, and having about 1300 sick and wounded in the squadron, without the necessary succours, it was determined to come to Vigo to provide what was necessary. As soon as I receive the details from each ship, they shall be forwarded to your Excellency. In this action the six ships under my command have fought with the greatest bravery; and I con-

consider the English squadron having avoided a second attack, to have been caused by the damage they had received in the action, since the forces of the two fleets were equalized by the quality of the ships, we having on our side no three-deckers, and two small ships of 64 guns.

**BATAVIAN FLOTILLA.**—*Vice-Admiral Verheuil's detailed Report of the Engagements of the 17th and 18th July, addressed to his Majesty Napoleon I. Emperor of the French and King of Italy. Dated Ambleteuse, July 26th, 1805.*

SIRE,—It was impossible, in the first report which I had the honour of laying before your Majesty, to include all the details of the action of the 17th and 18th of July, between a part of the Imperial Batavian flotilla and a squadron of the English navy; and not doubting that your Majesty wishes to be informed of all the circumstances of these engagements, as well as the conduct of the brave men who had a share in them, I have thought it my duty to submit a new report to your Imperial and Royal Majesty.

—On leaving the road of Dunkirk, I caused the squadron to range in two columns, so as to keep the fire of both free; I ordered the commandant of the prams, the brave Captain Lambour, to lead the outer line, and to place two prams in the centre, and one in the rear, so as to keep the exterior line more compact.—Captain Gerbrands commanded the advanced guard, Captain Carpentier the rear guard, and I commanded in person the centre, on board of the gun-boat No. 39. The gun-boats went under an easy sail, in order to give the prams, which did not sail so well, an opportunity of preserving the order of battle.

—Having arrived off Gravelines towards 9 o'clock at night, the enemy's division got under weigh; they remained at anchor until they found themselves abreast of the flotilla, although they might have attacked us much sooner, since the tide was still flowing, and they could consequently make the east: at a quarter past 9 the English division commenced its fire at long cannon shot distance; I did not return their fire until they came nearer us; the action then became very warm, the enemy directing their principal attack against our centre and rear. In each of the English ships there was a fire at the main-mast, in order, apparently, not to confound our vessels with theirs; but as we took the precaution to extinguish our fires, we had the advantage of aiming

with much more certainty.—Towards 10 the enemy directed their whole attack against the rear guard, by which means three of our gun-boats were much damaged, and becoming ungovernable, were run ashore. It was likewise by the same means that the Praam La Ville de Geneve was baffled in her manœuvres, and grounded during an hour, defending herself vigorously, until the enemy were obliged to abandon her; upon her being got off, she proceeded on her voyage, and was again attacked; and, although her mainmast was damaged, by the dexterity and bravery of Lieutenant Boissy, her commander, she opened for herself a passage, and rejoined the flotilla. Towards 11 the enemy left us the field of battle free, and stood to sea, although nothing prevented their continuing the combat. Having arrived off Calais, I made the signal to prepare to anchor, and soon afterwards to anchor.—I immediately landed and mounted on horse-back, in order to ride along the coast and examine the situation of the gun-boats that were ashore. I saw with satisfaction the fine position of the formidable light artillery, commanded by Gen. Sorbier; it protected the 5 stranded gun-boats; 2 others were also obliged to run ashore, owing to the loss of their rudders. At day-break, on the commencement of flood-tide, 3 of these gun-boats floated off, and proceeded on their passage: they were immediately seen by the enemy, and attacked by two sloops of war and two brigs. I observed with infinite satisfaction, that one of the gun-boats, commanded by Lieutenant Visscher, fired three broadsides before the sloop of war with which she was engaged fired once, which obliged the latter to sheer off.—Two gun-boats that were more damaged remained on the sand; one of them was obliged to disembark her artillery and ballast.—At break of day we saw the greatest part of the enemy's cruisers in the N. W. at a great distance in the offing; at  $\frac{1}{2}$  past 4 they rallied, and formed in line of battle.—I returned on board, and shortly afterwards the enemy began to attack us anew; they kept at short cannon-shot distance, contenting themselves with throwing a number of shells, several of which burst close to our vessels, but doing them very little harm.—The fire of our gun-boats and prams was well supported and strongly aided by the land batteries, which obliged the enemy to sheer off about 6 in the morning, standing in part to the westward; 7 of their vessels steered to the N. W. towards the coast of England, which made us conclude that some of them were too much damaged to

be able to keep the sea.—After this action I ordered, by signal, an account to be rendered me of the damage sustained by the different vessels: and I found that 9 gun-boats and 1 pram were unable to follow the rest of my little squadron. I sent them in to the port of Calais. There were besides 2 gun-boats stranded.—I landed in order to concert with the commandant of the Marine on measures proper to be taken for the prompt repair of the vessels which I had sent into port; after which I returned on board.—Towards 3 in the afternoon, I made the signal to prepare for getting under weigh.—The enemy's division having availed themselves in the morning of the tide to get to the westward, I supposed that they meant to take post between Cape Blancnez and Cape Grisnez; and that the passage would be entirely free for the vessels which I had ordered to weigh from Dunkirk.—At 3, the wind being E. N. E. with a good breeze and a clear sky, I made the signal to weigh, and to form in a single line of battle, at a quarter of a cable's distance. My signals were executed with such promptness, that I owe the greatest praise to my officers.—The enemy were in sight at a great distance in the offing, and there were abreast of the flotilla none but looking-out vessels, which made signal for our being under weigh, as soon as they saw us under sail.—At  $\frac{1}{2}$  past 4 a ship of the line, four frigates, and three brigs, fell in with us off Cape Blancnez, and kept abreast of us. I remarked with pleasure that they hesitated to attack us, and waited the other vessels of their division, which soon joined them, making in all 19 sail. They then formed in line of battle, and began, off Sangate, to press us closer; but before they were within reach of our guns, the land batteries threw some bombs which fell at no great distance from them. The enemy also began a cannonade, and I returned their fire; but they kept at so great a distance that I ceased firing. Some moments afterwards, the enemy having approached nearer, I re-commenced firing.—The force of the enemy increased successively in such a manner, that when we were off Wissant, it was composed of 45 vessels, of which two were of the line, and several frigates: the rest were sloops of war, and smaller vessels; the action then became very warm, and we made use, on both sides, of grape-shot.—Having entered the passage of the Banc à ligne, the order of battle was exactly preserved.—Although the

passage is not 50 toises broad, and that we were constantly obliged to have the lead in our hands, and often forced to increase or diminish sail, the fire of our batteries was so vigorously kept up, that none of these grand floating castles dared to approach us. On leaving the banks one gun boat only got aground, which, by that false manœuvre, occasioned two others to touch, but they did not cease firing.—Having arrived at the extremity of Cape Grisnez, all the line doubled the Cape in the best order; the three prams in the rear then kept up a fire which the enemy will long remember.—The manœuvres of the prams in a passage so narrow, and during an action so warm, do the greatest honour to the Commandant Lambour, and the officers who command them; they merit my highest praise. The formidable batteries of Grisnez also kept up a well-supported fire while we were abreast of the Cape.—After the whole line had doubled it, the enemy continued the attack upon the rear-guard; one of the gun-boats was so much damaged that it was obliged to keep close to the shore; some of the enemy's vessels continuing firing until we reached Ambleteuse, where we anchored with the squadron; some moments afterwards the enemy came anew, as if animated by a sentiment of rage, to attack us at anchor, and approached us within grape-shot distance; they were answered on our side with as much vigour as at the commencement. A frigate had the audacity to approach nearer than the others, but she paid dearly for her temerity, and was soon forced to sheer off; we saw distinctly that she suffered much, and that a great deal of confusion existed among her crew. I left the vessels in the roads, and caused to enter, with the night tide, seven of the gun-boats that had been most damaged.—The enemy's squadron stood to sea, and a strong division anchored two leagues from the coast, abreast of Ambleteuse: we observed that a great number of their vessels made the Coast of England.—On the following morning I had the satisfaction of seeing 54 vessels arrive from Dunkirk at Calais, without firing a single gun, the enemy having directed their whole attention to the side of Ambleteuse.—The gun-boats that went aground on the Banc à ligne came also into the road, and one gun-boat only, stranded near Odreselle, did not enter until the following tide.

(To be continued.)